STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
BSW PROGRAM

Class Days and Time: Thursday 4 – 6:30 pm
Class Location: SWK 204

SWK 315.091 Social Welfare Policy and Legislation
Spring 2018

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Office hours: Tuesday, 9 – 11 am; Wednesday, 9 am to 12 noon; Thursday, 9 – 11 am, 1 – 4pm; other times available by appointment.

Prerequisite: SWK 215, ECO 231
Co-requisite: SWK 350

COURSE SYLLABUS

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to provide you with an understanding of the ways in which social welfare services and programs are provided in the United States. The course will build upon your knowledge of both social welfare and social work history and philosophy, which was presented in SWK 215. Specifically, this course will closely examine social problems and issues, as well as the social welfare policies and services that are intended to address them. Special emphasis will be placed on the effects of social welfare policy on client groups, the availability of services, and the services delivered by generalist social workers. This course will also address issues related to diversity, oppression, and social and economic justice. An important component of SWK 315 is the discussion of the relationship between social welfare policy and generalist social work practice. This course is designated as writing enhanced.

REQUIRED TEXT:


RECOMMENDED TEXTS:


II. CURRICULUM DESCRIPTION

The BSW program at SFASU features generalist social work practice, defined as follows:

Generalist practice serves diverse client systems utilizing an ecological systems approach focusing on persons, families, groups, organizations and communities. It is not confined by a narrow cadre of theories; rather it is versatile enough to allow problems and situations, as well as strengths, capacities, and resources, to determine the practice approach. Generalist practice employs a problem-solving framework and a broad knowledge, value, and skill base which demands ethical practice and on-going self-assessment. Briefly, generalist social work practice:

- Is multi-level to include individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities
- Is multi-theory, allowing for the free selection of theories as appropriate
- Utilizes a problem identification and solving focus that follows a problem-solving framework
- Utilizes multiple interventions at multiple levels, as appropriate
- Addresses the complexity of individual, family, group, organizational and community system interactions
- Requires an integration of awareness, competence, and professional response to issues of values, ethics, diversity, culture, social justice, and populations-at-risk

III. PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES (PLO) (CSWE Core Competencies)

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior.
2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice.
5. Engage in Policy Practice.
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.
7. Assess, Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.

*Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS, 2015) from the Council on Social Work Education

IV. COMPONENT BEHAVIORS (Student Learning Outcomes: SLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
1. Analyze the profession’s history and current structures of social welfare policy and services (Competency 1, 5).
2. Demonstrate that policy affects service delivery and begin to collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action (Competency 5, 8).
3. Actively engage in policy practice within individual, families, groups, communities and organizations (Competency 5, 8).
4. Apply the role of policy in delivering services to systems of various sizes (Competency 5).
5. Use the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and the International Federation of Social Workers/International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work in
making ethical decisions (Competency 1).
6. Continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services in generalist practice (Competency 5, 7, 8).
7. Identify ways to advocate for human rights and social and economic justice in policy practice (Competency 3, 5).
8. To recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power in delivery services (Competency 2).

V. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

The primary instructional model for this course is collaborative learning. Specifically, the class will cover course content, course objectives, and methods of classroom assessment. The course will incorporate the following instructional strategies: lecture, class discussion, group exercises, online activities, assigned readings and individual projects. You are encouraged to actively participate in activities, ask questions, and contribute comments for discussion. You are also encouraged to offer input regarding instructional strategies and assignments. Most importantly, you are expected to be an active learner and to ask for clarification when you have questions. In order to be successful in the class, it is important that you attend regularly, read the assigned material, and come to class prepared to discuss what you have read. You will be expected to not only know the material presented, but to be able to apply it in experiential activities. Lectures will not duplicate the reading material except to clarify or to expand upon it, as well as connect it to material covered in prerequisite courses. The goal of this approach is to develop a safe learning environment that addresses a variety of learning styles, promotes critical thinking, and fosters creativity.

VI. COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS (per SFA Office of Instructional Technology)

This course will utilize Desire2Learn (D2L) to support the delivery of course content. You will need basic skills regarding the use of a word processor and web browser. You must have access to a computer that meets the university’s minimum computer system requirements (see http://sfaonline.sfasu.edu/gettingstarted.html for details). Computers are available to you through a number of labs across campus (see www.sfasu.edu or the instructor for details).

VII. COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1  Course Overview, D2L, EPAS, Code of Ethics
American Social Welfare Policy
Social Policy and the American Welfare State
Readings: Karger & Stoesz- Chapters 1 & 2; Schneider & Netting (1999); NASW Code of Ethics; IFSW Code of Ethics

Week 2  Searching for Resources on Social Problems, Policies, and Legislation
APA Presentation

Week 3  American Social Welfare Policy (cont)
Week 4  **American Social Welfare Policy** (cont)
Poverty in America
Video: 30 Days
*Readings:* Karger & Stoesz- Chapter 5; Kluever (2006); Kluever (2005)
*Suggested Resources:* Working but Poor (1999)

Week 5  **American Social Welfare Policy** (cont)
Poverty in America (cont)
**The Voluntary and For-Profit Social Sectors**
The Voluntary Sector Today
Privatization and Human Service Corporations
*Readings:* Karger & Stoesz- Chapter 6 & 7

Week 6  **Exam I**

Week 7  **The Government Sector**
The Making of Governmental Policy
Tax Policy and Income Distribution
Social Insurance Programs
*Readings:* Karger & Stoesz- Chapter 8, 9, & 10; Castro (2012); Lavine (2012); Bressette (2002); Anderson & Gryzlak (2002)
*Suggested Resources:* Lavine (2005, 2006a, 2006b); Padilla (1997)

Week 8  **The Government Sector** (cont)
Social Insurance Programs (cont)
Public Assistance Programs
*Readings:* Karger & Stoesz- Chapter 9, 10, & 11; Castro (2012); Lavine (2012); Bressette (2002); Anderson & Gryzlak (2002)
*Suggested Resources:* Lavine (2005, 2006a, 2006b); Padilla (1997)

Week 9  **Exam II**
**The Government Sector** (cont)
Housing Policies
*Readings:* Karger & Stoesz- Chapter 16

Week 10  **The Government Sector** (cont)
The American Health Care System
Videos: *Health Reform Hits Main Street* and *U. S. Health Care: The Good News*
*Readings:* Karger & Stoesz- Chapter 12; Dunkleberg (2012); Kaiser Foundation (2011, 2012a, 2012b)
Week 11  The Government Sector (cont)
      The American Health Care System (cont)

Week 12  The Government Sector (cont)
      Mental Health and Substance Abuse Policy
      Video: Are the Kids Alright?

Week 13  The Government Sector (cont)
      Mental Health and Substance Abuse Policy (cont)
      Criminal Justice
      Video: The New Asylums

Week 14  The Government Sector (cont)
      Child Welfare Policy
      Video: Aging Out
      Readings: Karger & Stoesz- Chapter 15; Castro & McCown (2004); McCown (2005a); McCown (2005b)

Week 15  The Government Sector (cont)
      The Politics of Food Policy and Rural Life
      The American Welfare State in Perspective
      The American Welfare State in International Perspective
      Readings: Karger & Stoesz- Chapters 17 & 18
      Current Issues in Social Policy
      Readings: To be announced

Week 16  Exam III (Final Exam)- 4:00pm to 6:00pm

VIII. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Class Attendance and Participation: In order for the class to discuss the readings, it is essential for you to read assigned material before coming to class, to attend class regularly, and to participate in class discussion. You are responsible for all material covered in class and assigned in the syllabus, whether or not you have attended class.

   Cell Phones/Pagers/Electronic Devices: Because such devices are disruptive to the classroom environment, I ask that you refrain from using them during class. I also ask that you either place such devices on silent mode or turn them off during class. Repeated interruptions may result in a deduction of points from the final average.
B. **Readings**: The course outline provides a list of required weekly readings. Since lectures and class discussions are designed to answer questions about the material and expand upon the basic concepts, you are expected to complete the assigned readings prior to class. Furthermore, you are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the information, as evidenced by active participation in class discussion. For example, you should present well-formulated questions and comments that demonstrate prior preparation.

C. **Exams**: Three major application exams will be given during the semester. **Exam I** will cover American Social Welfare Policy (Social Policy and the American Welfare State, Social Welfare Policy Research: A Framework for Policy Analysis, Religion and Social Welfare Policy, Discrimination in American Society, and Poverty in America), **Exam II** will cover The Voluntary and For-Profit Sectors (The Voluntary Sector Today, Privatization and Human Service Corporations) and The Government Sector (The Making of Government Policy, Tax Policy and Income Distribution, Social Insurance Programs, and Public Assistance Programs), and **Exam III** (final) will cover The Government Sector (The American Healthcare System, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Policy, Criminal Justice, Child Welfare Policy, Housing Policies, and The Politics of Food Policy and Rural Life) and The American Welfare State In Perspective. All material provided on the topics, including all assigned readings, discussions, lectures, discussion questions/responses (online), and guest presentations are subject to examination. The exams will consist primarily of essay questions and may contain matching, true/false, and/or multiple-choice questions.

You are expected to take all exams at the scheduled time. Permission to miss any exam will be based on the policy for excused absences as stated in the SFASU General Bulletin (available online at [http://www.sfasu.edu/73.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/73.asp)). Missing an exam without either prior permission or an excused absence will result in a grade of "0" on that exam. I will schedule make-up exams.

D. **Quizzes**: A total of 8 quizzes will be given over the course of the semester. The quizzes will either test for general comprehension of the course material (assigned readings and/or previous lecture topics), be based on active participation in a classroom activity, or attendance. The quizzes will be unannounced and may occur at anytime during the class period.

Missing a quiz, regardless of the reason, will result in a grade of “0” for the quiz.

E. **Assignments**: You are responsible for completing assignments in accordance with the specific guidelines identified in the assignment description (in the syllabus). Assignments A, B, & C are to be typewritten (by typewriter or word processor) in 12 pt. font with double spacing and standard margins. All assignments are to be in APA format per the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Failure to meet these guidelines will result in loss of points. See the descriptions of Assignments A, B & C for guidelines.

Late assignments will result in 10% of the total possible points being deducted from the total points earned for each day the assignment is late, with 10% deducted immediately following the date/time the assignment is due. The only exception is an excused absence as defined by the SFASU General Bulletin.
GRADING:

Exams  
3 @ 100 pts. each = 300

Quizzes  
8 @ 10 pts. each = 80

Assignment A = 50
Assignment B = 50
Assignment C = 100

Total = 580

GRADING SCALE:

A  519 - 580
B  461 - 518
C  403 - 460
D  345 - 402
F  0 - 344

IX. Academic Integrity (SFASU Policy A-9.1)

Honesty and representing one’s knowledge and abilities appropriately are important ethical principles of the social work profession. All violations of the Academic Integrity Policy will be addressed in accordance with SFASU Policy A-9.1 (SFASU Policy A-9.1 can be found at the web address below). All incidents will result in a grade of “0”. Given the limited number of graded assignments in this course, a “0” could have serious consequences for the student’s academic standing.

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp
Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

Please read the complete policy on Course Grades: http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades.pdf

Acceptable Student Behavior
Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

Please see the following link for the complete policy: http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-code-of-conduct_10.4.pdf

X. STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL LEARNING NEEDS AND DISABILITIES
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.
Assignment A: Annotated Bibliography

Before beginning this assignment, you need to choose a long-standing social issue or problem relevant to generalist social work practice.  *Your topic must be approved by the instructor prior to beginning your assignment.* I will approve your topics in class on _____. Once your topic has been approved, you will develop an annotated bibliography that addresses the following aspects of the social issue:

Description of the Problem
1) Problem definition/description
2) History of the problem
3) Etiology of the problem (causes and related factors)
4) Impact of the problem on diverse client systems
5) Competing points of view of the problem (what societal values, political ideologies, and social and economic conditions have impacted the framing of the problem?)

Description of Attempts to Resolve the Problem
1) Historically, what attempts (policies and programs) have been made to resolve the problem? What degree of success was achieved?
2) Currently, what attempts (policies and programs) are being made to resolve the problem? What degree of success has been achieved?

Implications for Generalist Social Work Practice
1) Historically, how were social workers involved in resolving the social problem (at a policy level)?
2) Currently, how are social workers involved in resolving the social problem (at a policy level)?
3) What are the implications for the delivery of generalist social work practice interventions?

The annotated bibliography must consist of at least 10 references, 8 of which must be articles from professional peer reviewed journals in social work or closely related disciplines. The remaining resources can be drawn from professional peer reviewed journals, books, and reliable internet resources. Of the 8 journal articles,
1) At least four articles from a *professional peer reviewed journal* that inform the description of the problem
2) At least two articles from a *professional peer reviewed journal* that inform the description of attempts to resolve the problem
3) At least two articles from a *professional peer reviewed journal* that inform the implications for generalist social work practice.

Each entry reference is to be in APA format and followed by two paragraphs that briefly describe the source’s contents (first paragraph) and importance to the chosen topic (second paragraph). *The paragraphs must summarize the information in your own words and should not contain direct quotes.* The entries (references) are to be in alphabetical order. For example:


The author reports the results of an exploratory qualitative study that investigated the application of “traditional” administrative functions and process to collaboration among
organizations (as defined by Mattessich & Monsey, 1992). The study employed semi-structured interviews with 12 social workers employed as administrators in human service organizations located in Southern California. Data analysis resulted in the following themes: 1) relationship building, 2) participatory planning, 3) coordinating and sharing of tasks, 4) collective decision-making, 5) problem solving/conflict resolution, and 6) facilitative leadership. The author provides an informative discussion of the themes and their implications for administrative involvement in collaborative efforts. The findings and conclusions are consistent with the literature on collaboration, as well as leadership and administration.

This article is important to my topic because…


Summary of the source’s contents (first paragraph) and a clear statement about its importance to the chosen topic (second paragraph).

The assignment will be evaluated based on its adherence to the above guidelines, as well as the following criteria: 1) demonstration of critical thinking skills, 2) ability to organize and clearly present the information, 3) writing skills (such as grammar and punctuation), and 4) adherence to APA guidelines.

You need to submit the assignment to the appropriate D2L dropbox by 4 pm on the due date for the assignment. The assignment will be considered late until it has been submitted to the D2L dropbox. *Assignments will not be accepted via email within or outside of D2L.*

The assignment is worth a total of 50 points and will be evaluated based on its adherence to the above guidelines.

**Please refer to the course schedule for the due date.**
Assignment B: Social Issues and Policies Analysis

Using the material from Assignment A, you will develop a paper that discusses the various aspects of a social issue and identifies historical and current attempts to address it. The paper should adhere to the following format:

**Introduction (2.5 pts)**
Introduce your topic and tell the audience what the paper will cover. Be sure that you clearly demonstrate the importance of the topic to generalist social work practice.

**Description of the Problem (12.5 pts)**
This section of the paper should cover the following in a narrative format:
- Problem definition/description
- History of the problem
- Etiology of the problem (causes and related factors)
- Impact of the problem on diverse client systems
- Competing points of view of the problem (what societal values, political ideologies, and social and economic conditions have impacted the framing of the problem?)

**Description of Attempts to Resolve the Problem (12.5 pts)**
This section of the paper should cover the following in a narrative format:
- Historically, what attempts (policies and programs) have been made to resolve the problem? What degree of success was achieved? What are the strengths and limitations of each of these attempts?
- Currently, what attempts (policies and programs) are being made to resolve the problem? What degree of success has been achieved? What are the strengths and limitations of each of these attempts?

**Implications for Generalist Social Work Practice (7.5 pts)**
This section of the paper should cover the following in a narrative format:
- Historically, how were social workers involved in resolving the social problem (at a policy level)?
- Currently, how are social workers involved in resolving the social problem (at a policy level)?
- What are the implications for the delivery of generalist social work practice interventions? Be sure to talk about consistency/inconsistency with social work values and ethics!

**Recommendations (7.5 pts)**
This section of the paper should cover the following in a narrative format:
- Based on your research, what would you change about the current approach(es) to resolving the social problem?
- Based on your research, what would you keep the same?

**Conclusion (2.5 pts)**
Be sure to summarize the main points of your proposal. This is your chance to reiterate the points made in your paper and to make sure the audience understands their importance!
Five (5) points of the grade will be based on the following criteria: 1) demonstration of critical thinking skills, 2) ability to organize and clearly present the information, 3) writing skills (such as grammar and punctuation), and 4) adherence to APA guidelines.

Your paper must be at least 12 pages in length (5 points will be deducted from papers that do not meet the minimum length requirement). It should contain at least 10 references, 8 of which must be articles from professional peer reviewed journals from social work or closely related disciplines (up to 5 points may be deducted from papers that do not meet this requirement). The remainder of the resources can be drawn from professional peer reviewed journals, books, and reliable internet resources.

You need to submit the assignment to the appropriate D2L dropbox by 4 pm on the due date for the assignment. The assignment will be considered late until it has been submitted to the D2L dropbox. *Assignments will not be accepted via email within or outside of D2L.*

The assignment is worth a total of 50 points and will be evaluated based on its adherence to the above guidelines.

**Please refer to the course schedule for the due date.**
Assignment C: Revision of Assignment B

For this assignment you will revise Assignment B based on the feedback I provide you. This assignment is to follow the guidelines, format and expectations outlined in the description for Assignment B. Also, it should reflect incorporation of the feedback provided on Assignment B. The points for Assignment C will be allocated as follows:

- Introduction (5 pts)
- Description of the Problem (25 pts)
- Description of Attempts to Resolve the Problem (25 pts)
- Implications for Generalist Social Work Practice (15 pts)
- Recommendations (15 pts)
- Conclusion (5 pts)

Ten (10) points of the grade will be based on the following criteria: 1) demonstration of critical thinking skills, 2) ability to organize and clearly present the information, 3) writing skills (such as grammar and punctuation), and 4) adherence to APA guidelines.

Your paper must be at least 12 pages in length (10 points will be deducted from papers that do not meet the minimum length requirement). It should contain at least 10 references, 8 of which must be articles from professional peer reviewed journals from social work or closely related disciplines (up to 10 points may be deducted from papers that do not meet this requirement). The remainder of the resources can be drawn from professional peer reviewed journals, books, and reliable internet resources.

You need to submit the assignment to the appropriate D2L dropbox by 4 pm on the due date for the assignment. The assignment will be considered late until it has been submitted to the D2L dropbox. Assignments will not be accepted via email within or outside of D2L.

The assignment is worth a total of 100 points and will be evaluated based on its adherence to the above guidelines.

Please refer to the course schedule for the due date.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


SUGGESTED READINGS


